

Greetings,

I am pleased to share that the City, working with the Agassiz community, has resolved outstanding issues over the design concept for the renovation of Sacramento Field. The formal park bid process will proceed in order for the renovation to be completed in the coming year. The City appreciates the time and effort the neighborhood has committed to the process, and we look forward to delivering a great neighborhood park to be enjoyed by all.

The following memo highlights the design changes that were made to the plan as a result of the recent November 9th community meeting. This memo also includes a list of other commitments the City has made throughout the process.

Background

Between June and September, a number of changes were made to the initial Sacramento Field renovation design concept as a result of public input. However, there were a few outstanding concerns about elements of the plan including the loop pathway and lighting around the field. In response, the City extended the formal bid time to allow for further public discussion. On November 9, 2016, the City and the Agassiz Neighborhood Council hosted a joint meeting to discuss the proposed design concept and to hear from all interested parties. City staff facilitated the community discussion and responded to questions about the elements of the design.

Key Agreements from the November 9th Community Meeting

Paving Material for the Loop Path

The City has continued to be committed to a pathway plan that meets both state and federal accessibility standards, as well as Universal Design (UD) principles. In order to make the loop path accessible, the City chose an asphalt path to provide an accessible surface that holds up over time, requires little maintenance and may be used throughout the year. The City then followed up and proposed a 1" rubber surface over the pathway due to concerns about safety. At this time, staff continued to search for other options that might meet UD standards.

On November 9th, staff presented three paving materials that met Universal Design standards including asphalt, rubber, and a third material, StaLok, a compacted, natural paving material consisting of crushed stone and granite. Based on the community discussion, the City has agreed to use StaLok as the paving material for the path surface.

Lighting Installation

The City has remained open to additional modifications concerning the lighting so long as the lighting is set to a level necessary for basic public safety and visibility without encouraging off-hours activity. Based on community input, the City has agreed to fewer light fixtures (a total of 8 LED light fixtures, 5 of which will have shields to restrict light trespass on adjacent properties). The lighting will be for the areas of the path that connect the garden entrance with the natural play area. For the remainder of the path, the City will install wiring and bases allowing future installation if needed. All wiring and base installation will be below grade and protected to prevent hazard and/or disruption to the field and play areas.

The City has committed to a process for the lighting that will have lights begin at low levels to start followed by a meeting with our Electrical Department and residents on site right after installation to verify there are no major problems with light trespass on adjacent properties. Lights will be turned off at 7:00PM in the evening. Designated park hours will continue to be from dawn to dusk.

Configuration of the Basketball Court

Feedback from the community meeting indicated a preference for the full court layout over the regulation half-court. To allow younger children to use a lower hoop, the basketball hoop at the north end of the court will be made adjustable to accommodate a lower hoop. The hoop will normally be left high, but adjusted to lower setting only by the Agassiz Afterschool program and Baldwin School. The hoop is to be returned to the high setting after each use.

Off-Leash Shared Use Hours Policy for Dogs

The final off-leash dog policy is still undetermined. Based on community interest, the City has agreed to explore a pilot off-leash hours approach that will allow for dogs to be off leash during designated hours (dogs and owners must be in compliance with the City's off-leash regulations). A final policy will be determined at a later date.

Commitments Moving Forward

The City is committed to making the following improvements and enhancements to Sacramento Field as part of the renovation process.

- **Two Park Entrances:** To create two entrances to the park that are visible, accessible, safe and well-identified by park signage providing a convenient way for the neighborhood to access the park.
- **Open Space:** To preserve the openness of the field to support a variety of active and passive activities. The design concept will be able to meet youth soccer field space needs as confirmed by Cambridge Youth Soccer leadership.
- **Enclosed tot lot and entrance gates:** Commitment to include a 20 x 40ft enclosed flat toddler play area to accommodate younger children that includes seating, a sand play area as well as an additional infant and toddler play structure that includes a slide, cleated toddler incline, toddler stairs, steering wheel, mirrored panel, and deck with covering. Additional commitment to add gates upon entry to the field at both entrances.
- **Nature-based Play Area:** To include a reimagined natural-based play area that achieves a less artificial look. The design will be able to accommodate winter sledding.
- **Sitting areas and other park amenities:** To provide amenities that currently do not exist including seating and tables, bike parking, message board, historical marker, benches, and a water fountain.
- **Commitments to Sacramento Community Garden:** The square footage loss from the community garden for the new path will be replaced with an equivalent amount of area at the back of the garden. Selective tree pruning management over a period of several years will be undertaken by the City arborist, including the removal of the mulberry tree. In addition, there will be new garden fencing and gates, water spigot, message board, and raised planter beds. Sequencing of improvements will be carefully worked out in advance with gardeners.
- **Landscaping Improvements:** To incorporate landscaping improvements with native tree plantings as well as buffer planting of shrubs and vines to visually soften the edges, create shade, attract birds, and give more privacy to abutters.
- **Multi-use Hard Surface Ball Court:** To resurface and re-line the court, replace the timber retaining wall with masonry wall, and fencing.
- **Drainage and Storm Water Management Improvements:** The City will ensure that when the field is redone that it has grades to better cooperate with the catch basins, e.g. a crown in the center of the field to take water to basins better. In addition, DPW has renewed a commitment to maintain the nine catch basins on a regular schedule.

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